

## **Coordinated Effort Treats Approximately 532 Acres of Tamarisk from Fremont to Bent Counties**

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**La Junta, Colo., September 26, 2007**—Many partners and funding sources helped treat approximately 532 acres of tamarisk in Fremont, Pueblo, Huerfano, Otero, and Bent counties recently, according to John Knapp, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) area conservationist.

NRCS and its Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Colorado Invasive Plant Program was one of the funding sources. The EQIP Colorado Invasive Plant Program is a voluntary program for landowners who want to improve the productivity of range and riparian lands for agriculture and wildlife by reducing the impact of noxious weeds.

“We owe a special thank you to J.R. Phillips, manager of the Fremont County Weed Control Department,” said Knapp. “J.R. coordinated the spraying with the landowners and agencies in the various counties so that we could get the aerial applicator, who is from the West Slope, to do many projects in Southeastern Colorado at one time.”

The chemical used for the projects takes three years to kill all parts of the tamarisk plant so that no re-growth occurs. After this time period the tamarisk can be removed.

According to the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) tamarisk contributes to the development of saline soil conditions which thins out native plants. Tamarisk stands are dense and impede the movements of both wildlife and livestock. It also impairs the function of shallow water wetlands by lowering water tables, according to NRCS. Tamarisk also causes issues with the maintenance of irrigation ditches and canals.

Other partners in the different counties include Fremont County, Fremont County Weed Board, Fremont Conservation District, Turkey Creek Conservation District, Pueblo County, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Upper Arkansas Weed Management Association, Huerfano County, CSU Cooperative Extension, Upper Huerfano Conservation District, West Otero Timpas Conservation District, CSFS, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Otero County, Bent County Conservation District, Arkansas River Conservancy District, U.S. Forest Service, private landowners, and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

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